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ABSTRACT

This report by the President's Commission reviews literature on educational international exchanges and makes recommendations for further research. International exchanges include exchanges in both directions and at all levels: high school, college undergraduate and graduate studies, and overseas teaching and research by school, college, and university staff. The commission found that research on international exchange is limited. A survey of the Fulbright Alumni Association, however, created much data for the evaluation of that program. Studies conducted by the General Accounting Office, the Rockefeller Foundation ("Corners of a Foreign Field"), the Ford Foundation ("International Studies Review: A Staff Study") relate mainly to overseas research by American scholars. The lack of new research on undergraduate study reflects the limited amount of federal funds which have gone to this sector. Thus, the President's Commission has recommended research to include data on the extent of international exchange, impact of teacher exchanges on curricula and teaching approaches, and impact of pupil experience on values and foreign language acquisition. At the undergraduate level studies should also include sex, major field, types of programs, students' financial circumstances, impact on choice of major or career, graduate study, and predeparture preparation. Faculty and scholar exchange research needs to focus on the contribution to foreign language and international studies programs. (KC)

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Barbara B. Burn

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

RESEARCH ON INTERNATIONAL INTERCHANGES

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION EXPERIENCE

By Barbara B. Burn

The White House Executive Order of April 1978 which authorized the establishment of the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies made no mention of international interchanges. The focus of its mandate was educational programs in the schools, colleges, and universities in this country and the job market for those who concentrate on foreign language and international studies in higher education.

In deciding how to pursue its mandate the Commission agreed at its first meeting in October 1978 that a priority concern should be international educational exchanges because of their importance to foreign language and international studies. The question then was: how to deal with this field in a way which would significantly advance it and identify its contribution to foreign language and international studies.

The field is complex. The President's Commission defined it as including exchanges in both directions and at all levels: high school, college undergraduates, graduate study, and overseas teaching and research by school, college and university staff. While recognizing the importance of exchanges in the private sector which involve a vast array of fields: the performing arts and media, business, labor, youth, and citizen groups of all kinds--the President's Commission focussed on exchanges within our formal educational system.

In approaching exchanges, as with other priority concerns, the President's Commission assigned several of its members to a task force on the

subject: the Rev. Timothy Healy, President of Georgetown University; Allen Kassof, Executive Director of the International Research and Exchange Board, and as task force chairman, Samuel Myers, Executive Director of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education. Dr. Alice S. Ilchman although not a Commission member participated actively in the work of the task force; as Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Exchanges in the International Communication Agency, she brought to the task force not only USICA's experience and to a generous extent its institutional resources, but also her personal dedication to the importance of international interchange.

For most of the other priority concerns of the President's Commission we appointed a consultant to undertake a background paper on the "state of the art." The complexity of the international interchange field made this approach impractical. Experts on senior scholar international exchange are rarely equally informed on exchanges at the school or undergraduate level. The field also divides itself between experts on foreign student concerns and experts on the overseas experience of American students and scholars. In short, the way the field operates tends not to produce specialists on the entire field of exchanges. This situation also affects the limited research on international interchanges. Not only is such research limited; it is fragmented.

Frank Hull IV, probably one of the more active researchers in the field, documents in his presentation in our panel some of the problems I have alluded to. The reasons for the inadequacy of research on international interchange are many. School and higher education staff involved in initiating and implementing international exchanges

often take this on as an extra activity on top of their regular work, and hence have difficulty in handling program needs, much less adding to them an evaluative dimension. At a very practical and human level, it appears that persons disposed to involve themselves in foreign student or study abroad activities are unlikely to be knowledgeable about or drawn to the field of systematic assessment. International interchange tends to recruit people-oriented persons, not those wont to measure, evaluate and quantify its impact on people. This lack merits the concern of the International Studies Association and warrants its deliberate encouragement of research-minded ISA members to attempt such research.

In inquiring into international educational exchange the Commission made it a major focus of its second meeting, held in January 1979 in New York City. Presentations were made by Stephen Rhinesmith of the American Field Service and Wallace Edgerton of the Institute for International Education. Their messages dwelt on the need for research on and the evaluation of exchanges. An ad hoc consultative group convened by the Commission's Executive Director affirmed this need and the importance and difficulty of finding common themes and agendas among specialists in international exchange.

The President's Commission wanted not only to mine available knowledge and experience, but also to add to it in order to make the most persuasive case possible in the public and political arenas for whatever action and support the field requires. To this end the Commission joined forces with the then one-year old Fulbright Alumni Association to undertake a survey of the contribution of the Fulbright experience to the professional and personal lives of former American Fulbright grantees. This included Americans who had been abroad with Fulbright grants as students, teachers, lecturers, and researchers. The Fulbright Alumni Association did a

remarkable job, and its efforts resoundingly affirmed that former Fulbrighters ^{have} benefitted in manifold ways from the opportunity afforded to them by the Fulbright Program.

Of 5,000 questionnaires sent out to former Fulbright grantees the impressive number of 3,117 were returned. The information gathered through the survey fell under the following rubrics: 1) vital statistics; 2) background information on the Fulbright grant; 3) the Fulbright experience; 4) career impact of the experience; 5) grantees' post Fulbright internationally-related activities; 6) personal impact; 7) impact of family participation; 8) foreign language proficiency during and post-grant (and of spouses and children), and 9) administrative aspects of the Fulbright Program.

In considering the research needs on international interchanges, an important one assuredly is to use the rich collection of data from the Fulbright survey for a more detailed evaluation of the program. For example, interesting and useful insights can no doubt be obtained by comparing the experience of former grantees by sex, discipline, geographic region of their Fulbright experience, and type of grant (student, teacher, researcher or scholar). More important perhaps would be a comparative analysis of returns from the 50s, 60s, and 70s because of the impact of declining funding of the program in the last fifteen years on the kinds of persons awarded Fulbrights (fewer first-rank scholars in recent years) and ^{of} the contribution of the Fulbright experience to their careers. The evidence suggests that this has been diminishing as the funding and prestige of the program have eroded.

The President's Commission did not present any concrete recommendations for research on international interchange. But its examination of this

field affirmed the need for more research, especially on research and study abroad. At the same time a useful byproduct of the work of the Commission was the encouragement that its existence gave to the initiation or swifter completion of various studies pertinent to international interchange. Still other studies were prompted not by the Commission itself but by the circumstances and concerns which led to its establishment.

The General Accounting Office has produced a number of studies on the exchange-of-persons programs of the U.S. Government, in large part growing out of a symposium it sponsored on this subject in December 1976. In the spring of 1977 it laid out a program of work for itself¹ which included studies of the East-West Center, other nations' exchange-of-persons programs, the need for a central inventory reporting system on international exchange-of-persons programs, government incentives to private sector programs, and a review of foreign language and area study programs. This program of work has produced a series of useful publications which should be valuable to persons concerned with international interchange and the wider field of international studies.²

Several major studies pertinent to international interchange which were directly or indirectly prompted by the President's Commission or coincided with its existence, understandably emphasized federal funding needs, especially to support the research and study abroad so essential to foreign language and international studies. The role of American

1. International Educational and Cultural Exchange-of-Persons Programs, Approved Work Plans, International Division, U.S. General Accounting Office, May 26, 1977.

2. Coordination of International Exchange and Training Programs--Opportunities and Limitations, July 24, 1978.

Study of Foreign Languages and Related Areas -- Federal Support, Administration, Need, September 13, 1978

overseas research centers in the humanities and social sciences -- the Universities Service Center in Hong Kong, the American Research Center in Cairo, and others -- is examined in the recent Corners of a Foreign Field, thus making possible a better understanding of the importance of these centers abroad and the continuing precariousness of their finances.³

The Ford Foundation study, International Studies Review, A Staff Study,⁴ in addition to assessing the health of international studies at fifteen major universities, analyzed the adequacy of the major individual awards programs in relation to international research needs, including the Fulbright Program, the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Guggenheim, Japan, and Tinker Foundations, the American Institute of Indian Studies, and the programs jointly administered by the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council. A study done by the Rand Corporation for the President's Commission also touches upon support for international studies research abroad and the American overseas research centers, underscoring the problem of unpredictable funding and its possible consequences for the quality of international studies research.⁵

The Public Diplomacy of Other Countries: Implications for the United States, July 23, 1979.

Flexibility -- Key to Administering Fulbright-Hays Exchange Program, December 10, 1979.

3. Robert McC. Adams and Corinne S. Schelling, editors, Corners of a Foreign Field, New York: the Rockefeller Foundation, August 1979.

4. Elinor G. Barber and Warren Ilchman, International Studies Review, A Staff Study, New York: the Ford Foundation, September 1979.

5. Sue E. Berryman, Paul F. Langer, John Pincus, and Richard H. Solomon, Foreign Language and International Studies Specialists: The Marketplace and National Policy, Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, September 1979.

That the above-mentioned studies related mainly to overseas research by American scholars and researchers no doubt is not unrelated to the hopes raised by the establishment of the President's Commission that more federal funding might flow to overseas research programs as a consequence of the Commission's recommendations. That new studies were not prompted on undergraduate study abroad may reflect the fact that only very limited federal funds have gone to this sector, and that observers and practitioners have been pessimistic about prospects for altering this situation. An evaluation of the teacher exchange program administered by the Office of Education whose importance in international interchange is scarcely reflected in the limited scope of that program, (only about 150 American teachers were abroad last year in the school-to-school program) was underway during 1979. Although the need for such an evaluation has long existed, the existence of the President's Commission cannot be credited with OE's decision to launch it.

The subfield which has so far dominated in published research on international interchange is foreign student affairs. The 1976 publication, The World's Students in the U.S., gives annotated references on more than 500 publications -- mainly relating to foreign students -- that appeared since 1965.⁶ Although relatively few of the many highly useful publications of the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs fall in the category of research, a recent exception is The Relevance of U.S. Graduate Programs to Foreign Students from Developing Countries, a report of a survey conducted by NAFSA in cooperation with The Council of Graduate

6. Michael J. Flack and Seth Spaulding, The World's Students in the U.S.: A Review and Evaluation of Research on Foreign Students, New York, Praeger Special Studies, 1976.

Schools. ⁷

Another recent study on the relevance of U.S. higher education to foreign students was the Institute of International Education's report on its February 1979 conference held in Washington, D.C.⁸ With the prospect of declining enrollments of American students in U.S. colleges and universities and the likelihood that many of them will recruit foreign students more actively than ever before in order to fill their dormitories and classrooms, more research on the foreign student experience in the U.S., its relevance to home country needs, and how various programs and services can strengthen and enhance this experience should be encouraged.

The foregoing overview constitutes the background for the research recommendations on international interchange that might be inferred as flowing from the experience of the President's Commission. The Commission's view of the importance of international interchange as summarized in the following statements also suggests some priorities for such research.

Reciprocal academic and scholarly exchanges assure access for our experts to foreign societies, especially at a time when many governments are seeking to regulate the outflow of scholarly and scientific information. Exchanges also provide new generations of U.S. specialists with opportunities for on-the-ground training and experience, and strengthen the interest and competence of our college and high school teachers and students in foreign languages and international topics. For students, whatever their field of interest, carefully planned experience abroad can have a lifelong impact on values and on concern for and understanding of other cultures.⁹

Although the large numbers of foreign students and academic visitors coming to the United States outside organized exchange programs were not of primary concern to the Commission's inquiry, we note that their presence deserves more consistent and thoughtful attention than it now receives.

7. Marvin Baron, The Relevance of U.S. Graduate Programs to Foreign Students from Developing Countries, Washington, D.C.: NAFSA, 1979.

8. Strength Through Wisdom, A Critique of U.S. Capability; A Report to the President from the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, November 1979
p. 102.

These visitors represent an important opportunity for us, since they frequently rise to influential positions in their own countries. Moreover, although we recognize that the primary purpose of foreign students in the U.S. is to advance their professional goals, while here they could assist in encouraging international perspectives in academic and extra-curricular programs on our campuses, as well as in our communities.¹⁰

These excerpts from the Commission's report reflect its emphasis on international exchanges as a means to strengthen foreign language study, train researchers and scholars, and advance our knowledge of other nations. But overseas opportunities for college and high school teachers and students and positive experience for foreign students and scholars in the U.S. were also regarded as important by the Commission.

In all these fields more research is needed. One index of the relative paucity of research on international interchange is how little has been funded under the National Defense Education Act, Title VI, Section 602. Although research on exchanges is not specifically authorized in this section, it can be supported as a survey or study relating to foreign language and area studies or the development of training materials. Section 602 empowers the U.S. Commissioner of Education:

...directly or by contract, to make studies and surveys to determine the need for increased or improved instruction in modern foreign languages and other fields needed to provide a full understanding of the areas, regions, or countries in which such languages are commonly used, to conduct research on more effective methods of teaching such languages and in such other fields, and to develop specialized materials for use in such training, or in training teachers of such languages or in such fields.

10. Strength Through Wisdom, p. 111.

It is worth noting that during the seventeen-year period 1959-1976 of 704 contracts awarded by the Office of Education under Section 602 which produced 803 reports, studies, and instructional materials, hardly any dealt with international interchange. Almost the only study listed in this field was The American Undergraduate, Off-Campus and Overseas: A Study of the Educational Validity of Such Programs,¹¹ conducted by our fellow panelist, W. Frank Hull, together with Walter H. Lemke Jr., and Richard T. Houang, a project from which a series of other publications resulted.

The preceding background on the President's Commission and on research on international interchange points to the following priorities in research on international interchange. If the President's Commission had not existed, the need for this research would still be valid and urgent. A Presidential commission was not essential to reveal the need.

1. Exchange at the School Level:

-- Basic data on the extent of international school exchange, numbers of American and foreign pupils and teachers participating, countries involved, nature of exchange (brief tour abroad or extended sojourn), impact of teacher exchanges on school curricula and teaching approaches, impact of pupil experience abroad on values, foreign language acquisition, choice of college or university and of undergraduate major, impact on non-participating fellow students and teachers, cost and other incentives and deterrents.

The American Field Service is currently attempting much more systematic evaluation of the impact of its exchange programs on AFS participants.

11. Foreign Language, Area, and Other International Studies, A Bibliography of Research and Instructional Materials completed under the National Defense Education Act of 1958, Title VI, Section 602, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Education, no date, p.7.

When results are available, they should help illuminate some of the issues itemized above.

2. Undergraduate International Exchange

-- Foreign Students in the U.S.

More research is needed on the extent to which the presence of foreign students can encourage international perspectives in curricular and extra-curricular programs at colleges and universities. Excellent work has been done in this by Josef Mestenhauser at the University of Minnesota¹² and others at still other colleges and universities. The increased recognition of inter-cultural communication as a professional and disciplinary field in the 1970's has also contributed to increased awareness of the resource for international education which foreign students represent. The President's Commission's emphasis on this resource suggest a need for more research on how to assess and strengthen American learning from foreign students.

-- Undergraduate Study Abroad

A number of research recommendations flow from the Commission's already mentioned concern with undergraduate study abroad: "For students, whatever their field of interest, carefully planned experience abroad can have a lifelong impact on values and on concern for and understanding of other cultures."

a) To assess the impact of study abroad, basic data, now woefully lacking, should be collected: numbers of students participating, sex, major field, foreign countries involved, kinds of programs participated in (enrollment in foreign higher education institutions, separately organized American programs,

¹² Josef A. Mestenhauser, Learning with Foreign Students, University of Minnesota, 1976.

independent study), students' financial circumstances, students' home institutions.

b) To identify the effect of study abroad on students' values and their understanding of other cultures requires research on such concerns as impact on choice of major, record in completing undergraduate degrees, decisions about graduate or professional study, choice of career, interest in reading the foreign press and books published abroad,¹³ knowledge of and attitude towards foreign countries and peoples,¹⁴ including foreign students in the U.S., students' development of new cultural interests, and the contribution of returned students to strengthening international perspectives in the classroom and in the extracurricular life of their campuses.

c) Careful planning of overseas study as urged by the Commission, calls for research on such matters as student selection, pre-departure orientation, follow-up programming for returned students, overseas program selection by the U.S. college or university, and strategies to maximize student learning about other countries and cultural values while abroad.¹⁵ Crucial also are studies on the obstacles to overseas study, including international student exchanges, such as student finance, inadequate faculty involvement and support, and non-articulation of curricula between the home and foreign

¹³ These factors were assessed in: Irwin Abrams, The Impact of Antioch Education Through Experience Abroad, paper presented at the International Studies Association meeting, Washington, D.C., February 23, 1978, mimeographed.

¹⁴ An interesting if limited study of these factors is: Adrei S. Markovits and John T. Keeler, "The Euro-Consciousness of American College Students: A Survey of Knowledge and Attitudes at Five 'Elite' Institutions, European Studies Newsletter, Council for European Studies, VII, No. 6 (May 1978), pp. 1-22

¹⁵ Some of these factors were examined in: Maryelise Suffern Lamet, Sterling A. Lamet, and David E. Whitcomb, Indepth Evaluation of International Student Exchanges, Report on a Pilot Study for the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, University of Massachusetts at Amherst: International Programs Office, September 1979.

institution.¹⁶

3. International Exchanges of Faculty and Scholars

The need for more research on the Fulbright Program has already been mentioned, especially of the impact of declining funding on the program's contribution to grantees' careers and the quality and nature of the program.

The Commission urged that international studies centers:

Give serious consideration to establishing regular and continuing exchange relationships at the faculty and student levels with institutions abroad in their areas of specialized interest.¹⁷

The Commission also urged "faculty exchanges as an important means for strengthening international teaching and research."¹⁸

Implied by these recommendations is a need for research on the contribution of international scholarly exchanges to foreign language and international studies programs. Very little research has been done on this topic. The exchanges of lecturers and researchers under the Fulbright Program mostly do not involve international/area studies specialists. University international studies centers funded by NDEA Title VI have recently been spending less of their federal funds on international travel, thus suggesting that links with institutions abroad in their field of interest may be weakening.

As international studies programs at higher education institutions

¹⁶ Alan Smith, Joint Programmes of Study - An Instrument of European Cooperation in Higher Education, Paris: Institute of Education of the European Cultural Foundation, typed report, 1978, discusses these issues in relation to exchanges in the European Community.

¹⁷ Strength Through Wisdom, p. 88.

¹⁸ Strength Through Wisdom, p. 110.

in other countries have matured, it is important to examine how scholarly exchanges operating on a basis of genuine equality can link international studies programs in American universities with those in the countries abroad that correspond to the American centers' geographic field of interest in a relationship of true partnership.

This paper has mostly not discussed foreign language study in relation to research on international interchange. However, among the major implications for research of the work of the Commission is the urgent need for research on the contribution of study abroad on the motivation for foreign language study, to the achievement of foreign language proficiency, to strengthening the teaching ability of American foreign language teachers, and to developing more effective methodologies in foreign language teaching.